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## II.—GOETHE'S REVISION AND COMPLETION OF HIS *TASSO*

Goethe's literary sources for the *Ur-Tasso* acquainted him with the legend of Tasso, which had sprung up even before the publication of the first biography of the poet, by Manso, in 1620 (twenty-five years after Tasso's death), and flourisht uncheckt till the appearance, in 1785, in Rome, of the Abbate Serassi's *La Vita di Torquato Tasso*. One prominent feature of the legend, the love affair between the poet and the Princess Leonora, sister of the Duke of Ferrara, was retained by Goethe, even after he read Serassi's attempts to disprove it, because he was making the love motive in the drama a reflection of his own relation to Frau von Stein. As that Platonic relation had unfolded itself in life its reflection had assumed shape in the drama, till, on the completion of the second act, the poet had realized that there was a crisis ahead, both in life and in the play; and as he did not care to picture it in fancy, the two-act fragment was laid aside, in November, 1781, and was not toucht again till the author went to Italy. This fragment, the *Ur-Tasso*, was written in "poetischer Prosa." The finisht drama is in un-rimed iambic pentameters. The revision of the drama was begun in Italy and finisht after the poet's return to Weimar. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss certain features of the history of that revision.

My presentation produces no new documentary material, but attempts to read between the lines of documents already publisht. I take for granted, because it is a most plausible assumption, even tho it does not seem to have occurred to others, that Goethe had become acquainted with Serassi's

biography some time before the date of the letter in which he said he was reading the work. It would be absurd to maintain that his letters and conversations that have come down to us contain the full record of his reading. Serassi is mentioned by him only twice: once in a letter from Italy, in 1788, and once in the year 1816. He drew material for his various writings from many a book which he never mentioned in letters or conversations, and investigators have unhesitatingly announced discoveries in such sources. Psychological supplementation of documents forms a necessary part of the study of such a problem as this.

Unlike scholars who occasionally bolster up their theories by asserting that Goethe was mistaken in his utterances concerning his past, as well as future, work on the drama, I hold to the view that with regard to the past the poet himself is our best-informed authority, and that his prophecies of what he should do, or have to do, in the future must be looked upon as mere prophecies, subject to further developments. Any investigator who reads thru, in chronological order, all of Goethe's recorded references to *Faust* or *Tasso* will certainly come to the conclusion that the poet himself would never have claimed any gift of prophecy as to these two works, if he had been confronted by his attempts in that field, as they have been so conveniently arranged by the indefatigable Gräf.<sup>1</sup> I distinguish, then, sharply between Goethe's historical reports and his forecastings.

Another point on which I take a step forward, as I believe, is the number of times the word "Antonio" is to be

<sup>1</sup> *Goethe über seine Dichtungen. Versuch einer Sammlung aller Äusserungen des Dichters über seine poetischen Werke, von Dr. Hans Gerhard Gräf. Frankfurt a/M. 1901-1914. 9 vols.*

scanned as three syllables in our drama, and the number of times as four syllables. In two cases the word occurs at the end of the line and, if scanned as four syllables, gives the line six stresses. As there are over twenty other undisputed six-stress lines in the drama, I unhesitatingly add two more to the number, because, after a certain date,—presumably after discussing matters metrical with his friend Moritz—Goethe began to scan the word as four syllables; and, since the third act, known to have been composed after that date, contains the word as four syllables in six undisputed cases, it is not only possible, as Scheidemantel admits, but most probable, that Goethe scanned the word also as four syllables in these two cases where it occurs at the end of the line.<sup>2</sup>

On the third point I find myself slightly at variance with the chief authority, viz., Scheidemantel, who discovered and interpreted the three receipts for money paid by Goethe to his amanuensis Vogel for copying the whole of manuscript “A” of the drama and all of manuscript “B” except the third act.

Let us now examine the documents.

When Goethe, on his tour of Italy, reached Venice, he hired gondoliers to sing verses to him from Tasso, according to the beautiful custom which had kept Tasso’s poetry alive among the common people. In Ferrara he sought to find the prison in which the unfortunate poet had languished so long, and it made him “ganz mürrisch” when the guides showed him, instead of the real prison, a wood bin or coal vault, which had been found to make a stronger appeal to the average tourist. In Rome he visited Tasso’s tomb and examined the death-mask bust of the poet, report-

<sup>2</sup> *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Goethes Torquato Tasso, von Eduard Scheidemantel. Programm, Weimar, 1896, p. 9.*

ing his observations to Frau von Stein (Feb. 2, 1787): "Das Gesicht ist von Wachs und soll über seinen Leichnam gegossen sein. Es ist nicht ganz scharf und hier und da verdorben, im Ganzen aber ein trefflicher, zarter, feiner Mensch." These brief contacts with the atmosphere of the historical Tasso sufficed to start work anew on the drama.

If we assume that this was the time when Goethe first made the acquaintance of Serassi's *La Vita di Torquato Tasso*, from which he acquired his first reliable knowledge of Tasso's real character and experiences, and became aware of the difference between the Tasso of legend and the Tasso of history, we shall better understand the further documents we have to consider. It is only reasonable to assume that a poet who was carrying with him the project of completing in Italy his unfinished *Tasso*, and was taking such pains to visit the scenes of Tasso's sufferings, and study his portraits, found out, either thru inquiry or incidentally, about the wonderful biography of the poet which had appeared less than two years before.

The documents show that Goethe began work on the new *Tasso* in January, 1787, and that, in February, this was the only literary work he planned to take with him from Rome on his journey to Naples and Sicily; for he proposed to finish it next. Whether or not he began by seeking to put the *Ur-Tasso* into verse before advancing to the third act, we do not know. He may have confined himself at first to reading about Tasso and his times, in which case Serassi would undoubtedly be his chief study, as this biography, which takes into account all the sources available at the time and discusses critically all the previously published literature on Tasso, was recognized as the one authority on the subject. And who would dare to say that Goethe did not at this time study the life of Tasso?

There is one thing that we are certain about, viz., that in this very month of February he was passing thru a phase of his relation to Frau von Stein which gave him the right mood for completing the drama, so far as the love motive is concerned. The scholar who first recognized this fact, after pointing out the striking parallel between a passage of a letter to Frau von Stein and an important passage in *Tasso*, drew the following inference: "Somit wurzelt der Schluss des 'Tasso' genau ebenso in des Dichters gleichzeitiger Seelenstimmung wie die ersten Acte, und man kann sogar behaupten, dass der Bruch mit Charlotte [von Stein] und seine Vorboten während Goethes italienischer Reise die Vorbedingung für den Abschluss der Dichtung gewesen sind."<sup>3</sup>

The letter in which Büchner found the passage was dated the 21st of February. A passage in the *Italienische Reise* under the same date shows Goethe in a mood to destroy all he had previously written; partly, no doubt, because of the turn his relation to Frau von Stein had taken, but chiefly, I believe, because of the new conception of Tasso's life and character which he had formed after reading in Serassi's biography. The passage runs: "Eins habe ich über mich gewonnen, dass ich von meinen poetischen Arbeiten nichts mitnehme als 'Tasso' allein; zu ihm habe ich die beste Hoffnung . . . das Vorhandene muss ich ganz zerstören; das hat zu lange gelegen, und weder die Personen, noch der Plan, noch der Ton haben mit meiner jetzigen Ansicht die mindeste Verwandtschaft." For the moment we are concerned only with the pessimistic mood, and that passed away in a few weeks, if not sooner. Under date of March 30th, we read: "Die

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Büchner, *Selbsterlebtes in Goethes Tasso*, in *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, xv, pp. 178 ff.

zwei ersten Acte des 'Tasso,' in poetischer Prosa geschrieben, hatte ich von allen Papieren allein mit mir über See genommen."

The following words are very important: "Diese beiden Acte, in Absicht auf Plan und Gang ungefähr den gegenwärtigen gleich, aber schon vor zehn (sechs) Jahren geschrieben, hatten etwas Weichliches, Nebelhaftes, welches sich bald verlor, als ich nach neueren Ansichten die Form vorwalten und den Rhythmus eintreten liess." This is the only utterance concerning the relation of the plot and action of the *Ur-Tasso* to the first two acts of the finished drama that we have from anybody who ever saw them both, and I can see no reason for questioning the accuracy of Goethe's statement that the two acts of the *Ur-Tasso* were "in Absicht auf Plan und Gang ungefähr den gegenwärtigen gleich." How many lines of verse were composed we have no means of knowing.

Of the next day of the voyage we read: "Das ganze Stück ward um und um, durch und durch gedacht." Of the last day: "Ich war des ganzen Stückes so ziemlich Herr geworden." He was very happy to land in Palermo, and summed up the gain of the voyage in these words: "Der Plan meines Dramas war diese Tage daher, im Walfischbauch, ziemlich gediehen." But that is the last we hear of *Tasso* for some time, and when it is again mentioned it is as a postponed task. For example, on the 10th of January, 1788, in the *Italienische Reise*: "Wenn es mit Fertigung meiner Schriften unter gleichen Constellationen fortgeht, so muss ich mich im Laufe dieses Jahres in eine Prinzessin verlieben, um den 'Tasso,' ich muss mich dem Teufel übergeben, um den 'Faust' schreiben zu können, ob ich gleich zu Beidem wenig Lust fühle . . . Also die Prinzessin und den Teufel wollen wir in Geduld abwarten!"

Since he mentions *Tasso* first, we may assume that he took up for more thoro study the ponderous tome of Serassi's biography. On the first day of February he came to about the same conclusion as we noted in February of the previous year, and wrote, in a despairing mood (*Italienische Reise*): "Dann geht eine neue Not an, worin mir niemand raten noch helfen kann. 'Tasso' muss umgearbeitet werden, was da steht, ist zu nichts zu brauchen, ich kann weder so endigen, noch alles wegwerfen. Solche Mühe hat Gott den Menschen gegeben!" Apparently he was not yet able to fuse in fancy the old material employed in the *Ur-Tasso* and the new gathered from Serassi. But he actually began work, as we learn from three different paralipomena to the *Italienische Reise*. With this renewed work came renewed hope. On the 16th of March he wrote to Carl August: "Nun steht mir fast nichts als der Hügel 'Tasso' und der Berg 'Faustus' vor der Nase. Ich werde weder Tag noch Nacht ruhen, bis beide fertig sind. Ich habe zu beiden eine sonderbare Neigung und neuerdings wunderbare Ansichten und Hoffnungen." On the 1st of March he was able to announce (*Italienische Reise*): "Auch ist der Plan von 'Tasso' in Ordnung." This must refer chiefly to the plot of the last three acts, since the original plot of the first two was in the main retained. On the 28th he wrote to Carl August:

Ich lese jetzt das Leben des Tasso, das Abbate Serassi und zwar recht gut geschrieben hat. Meine Absicht ist, meinen Geist mit dem Character und den Schicksalen dieses Dichters zu füllen, um auf der Reise etwas zu haben, das mich beschäftigt. Ich wünsche, das angefangene Stück, wo nicht zu endigen, doch weit zu führen, eh' ich zurückkomme. Hätte ich es nicht angefangen, so würde ich es jetzt nicht wählen, und ich erinnere mich noch wohl, dass Sie mir davon abrieten. Indessen wie der Reiz, der mich zu diesem Gegenstande führte, aus dem Innersten meiner Natur entstand, so schliesst sich auch jetzt die Arbeit, die ich unternehme, um es zu endigen, ganz



sonderbar an's Ende meiner italienischen Laufbahn, und ich kann nicht wünschen, dass es anders sein möge. Wir wollen sehen, was es wird.

When Goethe says in this letter: "Ich lese jetzt das Leben des Tasso," "jetzt" does not necessarily mean that the reading begins the day the letter is written. It may just as well mean 'in connection with my renewed work on the drama.' He must have read the book thru before saying at the beginning of the month: "Der Plan von 'Tasso' ist in Ordnung."

From this letter to Carl August we learn that it was the closing scenes of the drama, which have to do with Tasso's banishment from the court of Ferrara, that occupied Goethe on his homeward journey. He departed from Rome on the 23d of April, and his feelings on that occasion are vividly described in the original draft of the closing paragraphs of the *Italienische Reise*:

Bei meinem Abschied aus Rom empfand ich Schmerzen einer eignen Art. . . . Ich wiederholte mir in diesem Augenblicke immer und immer Ovids Elegie, die er dichtete, als die Erinnerung eines ähnlichen Schicksals ihn bis an's Ende der bewohnten Welt verfolgte. . . . Angebildet wurden jene Leiden den meinigen, und auf der Reise beschäftigte mich dieses innere Tun manchen Tag und Nacht. . . . Ich ermannte mich zu einer freieren poetischen Tätigkeit; der Gedanke an 'Tasso' ward angeknüpft, und ich bearbeitete die Stellen mit vorzüglicher Neigung, die mir in diesem Augenblick zunächst lagen. Den grössten Teil meines Aufenthalts in Florenz verbrachte ich in den dortigen Lust- und Prachtgärten. Dort schrieb ich die Stellen, die mir noch jetzt jene Zeit, jene Gefühle unmittelbar zurückrufen. . . . Wie mit Ovid dem Lokal nach, so konnte ich mich mit Tasso dem Schicksale nach vergleichen. . . . Diese Stimmung verliess mich nicht auf der Reise trotz aller Zerstreuung und Ablenkung.

From Milan he wrote to Knebel (May 24), in a mood which we have twice before noted: "Jetzt bin ich an einer sonderbaren Aufgabe, an 'Tasso.' Ich kann und darf

nichts darüber sagen. Die ersten Acte müssen fast ganz aufgeopfert werden." He had learned from Serassi so many facts not contained in his earlier sources that he doubtless felt it would be a difficult task to revise the *Ur-Tasso* in the light of his new information. It is very important that we should not lose sight of the fact that all the above cited passages which speak of the necessity of sacrificing what had already been written refer to the future, not the past, work of revision, whereas the important passage in the *Italienische Reise*, above quoted, which compares the *Ur-Tasso* with the drama as we know it, refers to the revised drama after it has been published. This passage was doubtless written in the year 1817.

On the 18th of June Goethe was again in Weimar, and a letter of the 21st of July to Jacobi reports him at work on *Tasso*. Three weeks later he wrote hopefully to Frau von Stein, but progress was slow, partly because of the infinite pains he was taking with the composition, partly because he was seeking to overcome Carl August's prejudice against the subject, and partly because of interruptions. On the 25th of October he reached a stopping place.

At this point it will be well to inquire what parts of the drama have now assumed finished form. Of revision of the first two acts there is almost no certain documentary evidence, tho I shall show that there is some internal evidence. The only work on the third act of which we possess any evidence is so slight in amount as to be virtually negligible. When we come to the fourth and fifth acts we find that Goethe gave us a valuable hint in his letter of the 28th of March to Carl August, and told the essential facts in the first draft of the closing paragraphs of the *Italienische Reise*, both of which passages I have quoted.

The evidence of these passages is thoroughly corroborated by receipts for the money paid by Goethe to his copyist

Vogel. The first receipt, dated the 4th of November, 1788, covers the work of copying the fifth act and the first three scenes of the fourth, in manuscript "A," as Scheidemantel has conclusively shown.<sup>4</sup> So Goethe had begun at the end and worked backwards, a method of attack more than once employed by him, both before and after the writing of *Tasso*.

The work still to be done, then, is the completion of the revision of the first two acts, and the writing of the third act and the last two scenes of the fourth. The last two scenes of act IV were doubtless laid aside temporarily because of their importance in the Antonio plot, which the poet seems not yet to have worked out in detail.

The fact that the name "Antonio," which occurs ten times in the text of the first two acts, is scanned eight of these times as three syllables and only twice as four syllables, and is everywhere in Act V and the first three scenes of act IV scanned as three syllables, whereas it must be read as four syllables thruout act III and in its one occurrence in scenes iv and v of act IV, seems to me to have a significance that has not yet been fully realized. Up to November 4, 1788, the date of Vogel's first receipt, the name of the character was Battista Pigna, and it appeared in the text eight times as "Battista" and once as "Pigna." Between November 4th and the 27th of January of the following year the character's name was changed to Antonio Montecatino, as the manuscript covered by Vogel's second receipt shows. This necessitated the changing of the name in the earlier copied manuscript of the fourth and fifth acts. Goethe made the change by substituting "Antonio" for "Battista," which forced "Antonio" to be

<sup>4</sup> *Neues zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Goethes Torquato Tasso*, in *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, xviii, pp. 163 ff.

a word of three syllables. The passage containing "Pigna" was recast, and in the new version "Antonio" was given three-syllable scansion. But thruout the new third act "Antonio" has four syllables. This tempts me to assume as extremely probable that much of the first and second acts had been provisionally put into verse while the character's name was still Battista, and that the change in name accounts for three-syllable "Antonio" in acts I and II as well as in acts IV and V, whereas the one line (359) containing four-syllable "Antonio" in act I and the one in act II (1524) may well have been written after the poet's ear had become accustomed to four-syllable "Antonio" thru the composition of act III. We know that the word has four syllables in the one line in which it occurs in the last two scenes of act IV, which were not among the parts of manuscript "A" covered by Vogel's first and second receipts. I ought to add here that Kuno Fischer called attention to at least one passage in act II that fits Battista better than Antonio, and Scheidemantel was suspicious "dass hier Battista sein Wesen getrieben habe," but neither one saw the full significance of three-syllable "Antonio" in acts I and II.<sup>5</sup>

On the 27th of January, 1789, Goethe paid Vogel 14 groschens for copying about two-thirds of the manuscript of acts II and III. In his article in the *Goethe-Jahrbuch* dealing with these receipts Scheidemantel says the parts covered by the second receipts were: all of act II, except the first scene, and of act III, except 77 lines of the second scene, 73 lines of the fourth scene, and the four lines of the fifth scene. The passages which Scheidemantel says were not yet copied are all written by Vogel, but in a different style of penmanship, and the paper has a different

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Scheidemantel, *Programm*, p. 9.

watermark. He suggests in a footnote another possible method of calculating the missing parts and arrives by this route at a result that seems more reasonable, but I think the case still awaits clear statement.

In order to make his statement come out right Scheidemantel has to say that Vogel, in making out his bills, took no account of quarter or half sheets, a sheet being folded to make four pages. I. e., Vogel would take no account of one page over, and might either throw in two pages for good measure, or charge for them as four pages. The figures which I propose assume that Vogel twice threw in an extra page and once charged for one page extra, viz., in his first receipt.

Beside the difference in penmanship and watermark, there is another reason why the first scene of the second act should have been laid aside temporarily, even tho it may have been ready to copy. In this scene between Tasso and the Princess we see the effect upon Tasso of his meeting with the envious courtier Antonio in the last scene of act I, which was not yet finally revised, as we shall see later. So I count this scene as not yet copied. The next gap, according to Scheidemantel, was four pages in the middle of scene ii of Act III. He cannot account for this in any way convincing to himself, but says the fact remains, and then in a footnote suggests the better calculation. I assume that Vogel wrote the four pages and was paid for them at the time, and that for some reason he later copied them again and received pay for that work also. That the last 77 lines of the act should have been added to the manuscript later is a reasonable supposition, considering the contents, to which we shall refer later, and I accept it.

Before proceeding to our calculation let us consider a further point, to which Scheidemantel first called attention in his *Programm* and again referred in the *Goethe-Jahr-*

*buch* article, viz., that the first three leaves of the first section of manuscript "A" of act III were cut out, as is shown by ends of words on the narrow margin that was left. Scheidemantel supposes that Vogel botcht his work here and had to recopy as a penalty. He may have had to crowd his lines too much to get them on six pages. We know that in the place of the six pages cut out eight were inserted and there are no two-page sheets in manuscript "A." The case would appear clearer, then, if we were to suppose that Vogel was paid for the six pages the first time he wrote them, and for only two pages when the eight were inserted in their stead. To sum up, my theory supposes that acts II and III were all copied except the first scene of act II and the last 77 lines of act III. Now for the figures.

The finisht manuscript of acts II and III numbers 83 pages. Subtract from this number 20 pages for act II, scene i, and that leaves 63. Subtract 5 for the end of act III and that leaves 58. Subtract 2 for the difference between the 6 pages cut out and the 8 pages put in their place, and we have left 56. Divide that by 4, the number of pages to a *Bogen*, and we have exactly the 14 *Bogen* for which Vogel receipted.

While we are dealing in figures let us check up Vogel's third receipt. He wrote all of manuscript "A" and all of manuscript "B" except the third act. There are two separate items in this bill, viz., 44 *Bogen* copied in April and June, and 21 *Bogen*, in July and August. Scheidemantel shows convincingly that the first item covers the balance of the first three acts of manuscript "A" and all of the first two acts of manuscript "B." In manuscript "A" act I has 47 pages; scene i of act II has 20 pages; add to this the 2 extra pages at the beginning of act III, and the 5 at the end, and the 4 recopied in the middle, and

we get 78 pages. Add to this the 98 pages of acts I and II of manuscript "B," and we get exactly the number of pages to make 44 *Bogen*. For the second item add to the 15 pages of the last two scenes of act IV of manuscript "A" the 70 pages of acts IV and V of manuscript "B," and we get 85 pages, making the 21 *Bogen* for which Vogel receipted, and one page extra, which he did not count.

Just when Goethe finisht act II, scene i, we do not know. I am inclined to believe that when Vogel began to copy acts II and III they were finisht, but the beginning of II and the end of III were temporarily withheld from the copyist, because of the close connection between these passages and the still-to-be-finisht fourth scene of act I and last two scenes of act IV. Goethe may have thought he might have several changes to make in these scenes and would rather make them before having the manuscript copied. Evidently he was still puzzling his brain over certain features of the Antonio plot, which was the harder to mold into shape, because it objectified the conflict between the Tasso and the Antonio in his own bosom.

Early in February, 1789, Goethe was at work again on the drama, and on the 15th he announced to Frau von Stein and Knebel that he was ready to begin to read to them the new drama. He could write the acts of his drama backwards, as we have seen, but could not expect his friends to enjoy reading them in that order. On the 6th of April Goethe described the state of his work in a letter to Carl August: "Ihre Frau Gemahlin sagt mir, dass Sie Freude an den [drei] ersten Scenen des 'Tasso' gehabt; dadurch ist ein Wunsch, den ich bei dieser gefährlichen Unternehmung vorzüglich gehegt, erfüllt, und ich gehe desto mutiger dem Ende entgegen. Ich habe noch drei Scenen zu schreiben, die mich wie lose Nymphen zum Besten haben, mich bald anlächeln und sich nahe zeigen,

dann wieder spröde tun und sich entfernen . . . Wenn ich vor den Feiertagen [Ostern] die letzte [4.] Scene des ersten Actes, wo Antonio zu den vier Personen, die wir nun kennen, hinzutritt, fertigen könnte, wäre ich sehr glücklich. Fast zweifle ich dran. Sobald sie geschrieben ist, schick ich sie."

Various attempts have been made to identify these three "lose Nymphen," but only those since Scheidemantel's discoveries have any weight nowadays. The letter itself would seem to point to the last scene of act I as one of the three, but Scheidemantel is inclined to reject it, in spite of the fact that there were still three scenes lacking when Goethe read the play to Duchess Luise almost five weeks later. He comes to the conclusion in his *Programm* (1896) that the first and second scenes of act III, which he counted as one, since the first is a monologue of only 8 lines, and scene v of act IV are two of the three "lose Nymphen." His argument in favor of the latter, that it reflects Goethe's own feelings at the time of his rupture with Frau von Stein, is convincing. If that scene is one of the three, then the other must be the scene just before it, for the monologue scene merely represents the reverberations in Tasso's emotional being of the discoveries made in the previous scene.

Scheidemantel's investigation, later, of Vogel's receipts upset his theory concerning act III, scene ii, and left him only two scenes to choose between for a substitute, viz., the last of act I and the first of act II. He is still inclined to reject the Antonio scene at the close of act I, on the ground that Goethe told Carl August he hoped to finish that scene before Easter, and there were still three unfinished scenes nearly five weeks after that announcement. It would seem more logical to assume that if there were three unfinished scenes on the 6th of April, and still three



on the 9th of May, they were the same three. Scheidemann's statement, that the opening scene of act II was "zweifellos von Vogel nach dem 5. April geschrieben," is correct, but on a previous page he has asserted the same thing of the whole of act I, for Vogel's manuscript is a fair copy of the original manuscript, which was destroyed. That argument, then, is no argument at all. My argument in favor of scene iv of act I is that, in addition to the evidence of the letter to Carl August, we should remember that it is the scene in which the Antonio plot is introduced, and that it is closely related to the last two scenes of act IV, as well as to the beginning of act II and the end of act III, which portions of manuscript "A" were certainly not copied till the three "lose Nymphen" yielded to the importunities of the poet. In view of Vogel's second receipt, and of the fact that the name of the minister of state did not have to be changed from Battista to Antonio in manuscript "A" of scenes iv and v of act IV, as well as of the further fact that the documents show Goethe to have begun at the beginning of act I and taken the scenes in regular order, after the date of Vogel's second receipt, we cannot well avoid the conclusion that scenes iv and v of act IV were two of the "lose Nymphen." If scene i of act II is to dispute the claim of scene iv of act I to the honor of being the third one, I cannot help thinking that said scene will have to assume the burden of proof, in view of the letter to Carl August. That is as near as we can get to a solution of the problem.

The rest of the story of the completion of the drama is fairly clear and I need not narrate it in detail. The first draft was completed in June, the final revision on the last day of July, 1789, nearly nine years after Goethe had penned the first line of the *Ur-Tasso*.

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